

Rep. John Campbell (Calif.) on Monday removed his name from consideration in the race to replace Rep. Jeb Hensarling (Texas) as chairman of the Republican Study Committee.

Campbell acknowledged in a letter to the founding members that his support for the massive Wall Street rescue package put him at odds with the majority of the conservative group. However, he did not link his withdrawal from the race to his position on the bailout.

“That one disagreement, sharp as it may have been, would not cause me to write this letter,” he said. “But I believe that our economic challenges as a nation are far from over.”

Campbell added that the federal government “will need to rebuild our entire financial regulatory structure, and debate will commence next year as well. The same views and principles that guided my vote on the [Wall Street rescue measure] will guide my policies on those debates ... Therefore I may find myself at odds with much of the leadership of RSC on these issues throughout the 111th Congress.”

He argued that this “would not be good, either for me or for the RSC.”

In addition to RSC founders Hensarling, Reps. John Shadegg (Ariz.), Mike Pence (Ind.), Sue Myrick (N.C.), Dan Burton (Ind.), John Doolittle (Calif.) and Sam Johnson (Texas), Campbell also sent the letter to the other members vying for the position — Reps. Tom Price (Ga.) and Marsha Blackburn (Tenn.).

Shadegg and Myrick joined 91 other House Republicans in voting for the bill that passed the House overwhelmingly on Friday.

Campbell’s office confirmed the letter was sent but declined to comment further on his decision.

Last Friday, Campbell acknowledged that his support for congressional action on the economic crisis may have cost him the race, but told The Hill that the topic was too important for him to stop and consider whether supporting it could hurt his aspirations for leadership positions in Congress.

Brad Dayspring, a spokesman for the RSC, said he would not comment on the race to succeed Hensarling other than to say, “no matter what, there will be a talented, hard-working, and principled conservative leading the RSC in the 111th Congress.”

No firm date has been selected for the election of a new chairman of the RSC, but the group’s bylaws state that it must occur by December.